

Luke 19:45-20:19

Toward the Cross (Part 1)

Scripture: Luke 19:45-20:19

Memory Verse: Psalm 118:22 *“The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.”*

Lesson Focus: Jesus’s road to the cross begins with a showdown with the religious leaders. We will immerse the kids into the story and challenge them to make sure He is the rock they are standing on by faith! *

Activities and Crafts: Rock of Salvation Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st/2nd Grade: Jesus is my Rock

Starter Activity: Pool Noodle “Clash”

Consider getting the lesson started with a one-on-one fencing challenge using pool noodles. We will provide you with some pool noodles to use in class. Pick a few pairs of volunteers or have the winner stay up for the next challenger. Make sure it is well organized and you are very clear with the rules such as:

- Keep kids several feet apart and ready with their noodle before you say “GO” *
- NO STRIKING ABOVE THE WAIST (flagrant attempts earn immediate forfeit)
- Other hand must be behind the back
- To win, your noodle must touch your opponent at their knees or below

Consider demonstrating first with you and another volunteer or even add yourself into the mix to challenge the winning kid! * When you are done with the game, transition into the lesson with some questions and discussion.

Believe it or not, there is a reason that we played this game today! As we got back into our study of Luke last weekend we saw Jesus enter the city of Jerusalem on a donkey fulfilling an ancient prophecy about the promised King and Savior. * There were large crowds that gladly received Him, but then there were a few others who didn’t.

Q: Who were the people that were angry and upset about how Jesus entered?

A: The religious leaders and Pharisees. (**Luke 19:39**)

This sets the stage for our next several lessons as Jesus heads to the cross in the final week of His earthly life. Jesus and the religious leaders have been enemies for a while, but now they will openly “clash” with each other with all of the crowds watching. Our lesson today covers the first battles between Jesus and these religious leaders (though not with pool noodles!). Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

Remember Jesus just made His grand entrance into the city of Jerusalem. This clash between Him and the religious leaders begins immediately where we left off last week.

Luke 19:45-46: WHOA! Jesus right away shakes things up! Other accounts mention that He even flipped over the tables! (see **Mark 11:15**) *

Q: Why was He so upset? A: Because instead of using God's temple for what He * intended, prayer and worship, the religious leaders were filling their pockets with money!

Luke 19:47a: Jesus then begins teaching, restoring another of God's purposes for it. *

Luke 19:47b-48: And here we see the first rumblings of the oncoming clash!

Q: What did it say the religious leaders wanted to do? A: Destroy * or kill Him!

Luke 20:1: And so begins Round 1 of this "showdown" between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders.

Q: What did the text say Jesus was teaching? A: The gospel! If only these religious leaders would have repented and believed! Instead they were blinded by their rage and make their first move against Jesus.

Luke 20:2: While they interrupted Jesus's teaching, it is a fair question that they ask. For not just ANYONE has the right to do what Jesus is doing in the temple. * They are essentially asking Jesus, "*Who do you think you are?*" hoping that He will say something wrong that will give them opportunity to "destroy" Him.

Luke 20:3-4: And with all of the people watching and listening, Jesus blocks their move and makes His counter-move with a question of His own. (**Teachers:** Consider holding a pool noodle as you teach and using it to impersonate Jesus dodging and striking!)

Q: Anyone remember what John the Baptist's mission was?

A: He was a prophet sent by God to get people ready for Jesus, God's promised King and Savior. Therefore, Jesus asks them whether John was right or wrong!

Luke 20:5-6: And now you see how brilliantly Jesus trapped the religious leaders with this question! Either answer means they lose! Checkmate!

Luke 20:7: The religious leaders realize they have lost this battle and just play dumb. This reminds me of what you sometimes do (and I did when I was kid) when you get busted and your parents ask you to fess up. You either have to lie or admit that you did wrong, which are both painful options. So instead you may just play dumb and sorta "shrug your shoulders". That's exactly what the religious leaders do here!

Luke 20:8: Jesus wins the first round and continues His teaching in the temple. *

Luke 20:9: Now we enter Round 2! Jesus silenced the Pharisees in Round 1 and now He is going to make the first move in Round 2 with a powerful parable.

Q: What is a parable? A: A story that teaches an important lesson. *

Luke 20:10-15: As we read through the story be thinking who each character might represent! **Teachers:** Consider having kids silently act this scene out as you read through these verses. Have a few kids sit down in the middle of the room next to each other representing the “vineyard” * and have two or three “vinedressers” pretend to take care of them. Have another leader be the “owner” standing a far off with three other kid volunteers who will one-by-one approach the vinedressers as you read through the passage. Have the vinedressers pretend to beat each one of them up sending them away. Finally, have a fourth volunteer dressed in white approach and have the vinedressers pretend to kill him. Grab props from the resource room and make it fun!

Q: Wow! After all of this what do you think the “owner” of the vineyard should do? *

Luke 20:16: Jesus answers His own question and the people appear to understand that He is talking about them! Let’s talk about who each character represents though!

Q: Who is the owner of the vineyard? A: God the Father

Q: Who is the vineyard? A: God’s people

Q: Who are the vinedressers? A: The Jewish religious leaders

Q: Who were the servants sent? A: Prophets like John the Baptist who were rejected. *

Q: Finally, who is the son? A: Jesus, the only Son of God! And with this parable He actually predicts His future death on the cross at the hands of these “vinedressers”!

Jesus is very clearly teaching that His death is going to usher in a new era that will bring all peoples to Himself. The Jewish religious system will be destroyed (which indeed did happen shortly after Jesus’s death in AD 70 when the Romans sacked Jerusalem) and the new “vineyard” will be the church, believers from all tribes, tongues, and nations!

Luke 20:17-18: Jesus then looks them right in the eye and quotes another prophecy (**Psalm 118:22**) at them which is His final move in Round 2. In this prophecy He clearly claims Himself to be the “chief cornerstone” * or the One sent by God the Father and issues a stern warning to all who reject Him. They want to destroy Him, but He is the Rock that can’t be destroyed!

Luke 20:19: While the religious leaders admitted defeat having nothing else to say, sadly they only get angrier and continue in their vain plot to destroy Him. * As we continue next week, we will see more clashes. And guess who wins! JESUS!

By the way, Jesus is taking no pleasure in these battles. Remember last week He entered the city weeping (**Luke 19:41**) knowing that they will not listen to Him. * If only these leaders would soften their hearts, repent and believe in the gospel!

Key Point: And that is our lesson is well. Jesus Christ is either going to be the rock that we stand on by faith or a rock that will destroy us if we reject Him just like He warned.

In **Acts 4:11-12**, shortly after Jesus’s death and resurrection, Peter quotes the same prophecy from **Psalm 118:22** as he is preaching to the Jews. He said there is salvation in “NO ONE ELSE”! Make Him the rock that you stand on by faith each and every day!

BRING IT HOME

Read Luke 20:17-18
What happens to
those who reject
Jesus?

Parent Signature:

Parent Challenge:
Who were the characters
in the Parable of the
Wicked Vinedressers?

Read Acts 4:11-12
Why is Jesus the only
way we can be saved?

